

IPSWICH SELECT BOARD
Meeting of Monday, March 11, 2019
Ipswich Town Hall | 25 Green Street

Pursuant to Open Meeting Law M.G.L. Chapter 30A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Select Board was held on Monday, March 11, 2019 at 7:00pm in Meeting Room A.

With a quorum present, Mr. Mootafian called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Board Members present: Nishan Mootafian, Chair; William Whitmore, Vice Chair; Linda Alexson; William Craft; Edward Rauscher

Also present: Anthony Marino, Town Manager; Eileen Page, Recording Secretary

Abbreviations used: FY19, Fiscal Year 2019; Forward Capacity Market (FCM); ELD, Electric Light Department; ISO-NE, Independent System Operator of New England; MMWEC, Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company;

Public Information: Agenda; Meeting Packet

Welcome/Announcements

Mr. Mootafian announced the upcoming meeting schedule:

- Monday, March 18: Biboard, possibly Triboard meeting pending School Committee confirmation
- Monday, March 25: No meeting
- Monday, April 1: Regularly scheduled Select Board meeting; Ms. Alexson will not be present
- Saturday, April 6: Bean Counting
- Tuesday, May 14: Annual Town Meeting in the Ipswich High School Performing Arts Center, 7:00pm

Citizen Queries

None.

Approval of Commercial Shellfish Permits

Police Chief Paul Nikas and Shellfish Constable Scott LaPreste appeared before the Board to recommend 122 commercial shellfishing applications for approval. All 122 applicants are prior commercial fishermen with no outstanding tax debts. There are three remaining permits available.

Mr. Whitmore asked about record keeping of and penalties for harvesters who violate the shellfish rules and regulations. Mr. LaPreste answered that the first violation is a fine, a secondary violation is a higher fine and the loss of permit for ten days, and a third violation results in a fine and a loss of permit for the remainder of the calendar year.

Vote: Mr. Whitmore moved to approve all commercial shellfish permits, and Mr. Rauscher seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1, with Ms. Alexson abstaining.

Approval of Shellfish Enhancement Fund FY19 Budget Request

Chief Nikas presented a line item that was unanimously recommended by the Shellfish Advisory Committee which designates \$10,000 to be used as a bounty for green crab trapping. In addition, the Town has received a \$12,500 grant to be used towards the bounty. Trapping season begins on April 1st, and the bounty is set at \$0.40 per pound of crabs trapped. Mr. LaPreste noted that there is a cookbook available online with green crab recipes.

Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to approve the line item, and Mr. Rauscher seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1, with Mr. Whitmore abstaining.

Price Approval for Green Crab Program

Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to approve the bounty payment, and Mr. Rauscher seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1, with Mr. Whitmore abstaining.

Withdrawing ELD Generator From ISO-NE Market

Jon Blair (Electric Manager) appeared before the Board for the second of two presentations regarding the Ipswich Power Plant's withdrawal from the Forward Capacity Market (FCM). Mr. Blair began by addressing rumors that had surfaced in the week since his initial presentation.

1. *"The ELD is on a breakeven path by 2020."*
Mr. Blair clarified that the Power Plant is a division of the ELD, and while the Department is financially stable, it is not influenced by the FCM. In FY19, the Plant's participation has brought in about \$1M. Continuation of participation in the FCM would result in a decline over the next five years, eventually resulting in a net benefit of about \$15,000.
2. *"This will be a renewable energy generating facility."*
Mr. Blair clarified that the Plant currently burns either diesel or natural gas, with a goal of operating exclusively on natural gas outside of power ups and shutdowns. The Plant will not generate renewable energy.
3. *"The financial benefit of this project is derived from selling power at a profit."*
Mr. Blair clarified that while the Plant is producing power, it is not pursuing wholesale commodity. The goal of the Plant is to reduce the costs of transmission and capacity.
4. *"The Ipswich Power Plant seeks to emulate the Town of Sheffield."*
Mr. Blair clarified that he is unaware of Sheffield's power strategy, but he did reference the Town of Sterling and their use of multi-megawatt batteries in his initial presentation.

Ms. Alexson asked how exiting the FCM would impact rate payers. Mr. Blair clarified that regardless of a continuation or exit, rates would be neither increased nor decreased. The Plant will still require staff, facilities, and machines. Ms. Alexson asked if legal action from National Grid was a risk that had been considered. Mr. Blair stated that it was discussed at length in the Subcommittee meetings, and has determined that the most likely course of action would be National Grid seeking revenue, which would be set aside in preparation.

Scott Johnson (4 Lillian Drive) voiced support for the transition, and asked what type of batteries may be used if the Plant chose to pursue them. Mr. Blair stated that MMWEC has commissioned a study and produced a proforma based on a 4-megawatt battery, but it is not a serious consideration for the Plant at this time.

Vote: Mr. Craft moved to approve the recommendation as set forth: Commence withdrawal of the Ipswich Power Plant from the Forward Capacity Market (FCM) and delist as a resource with the Independent System Operator of New England (ISO-NE) at the soonest possible opportunity; Locally dispatch the plant exclusively with natural gas to reduce costs associated with peak demand; Dedicate all economic benefits resulting from this strategy toward the future development of carbon-free generation, integration of energy strategy, and/or decommissioning of the Plant. Mr. Whitmore seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: March 4, 2019

Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to accept the minutes, and Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1, with Mr. Rauscher abstaining.

Town Manager Report

CITIZEN PETITIONS

There are currently 24 articles on the Annual Town Meeting warrant, six of which are citizen petitions. Mr. Marino clarified that citizen petitions are always put on the warrant.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

Risa Hassel will begin work as the Human Resources Manager on Monday, March 18th. She comes from the Town of Marblehead, where she worked extensively with the school system.

ACTION AMBULANCE

Mr. Marino met with the owners of Action Ambulance to discuss the Town's contract, which expires on December 31, 2019. The company will be producing a revenue report to share with the Town.

ROTARY

Mr. Marino attended a Rotary meeting last week where Ipswich High School students discussed their pollination project, installing a water bottle filling station outside of the Visitor Center, and their achievement of becoming a Green Ribbon School. Ipswich is one of only three schools that received this award from the State.

New Business: Open Space Non-Binding Ballot Question

Ms. Alexson presented her request to place a non-binding question on the annual election ballot asking voters if they would want to vote for the approval of any Open Space purchase over \$500,000. She cited her main reasons for bringing this request forward as: land purchases for any other purpose are discussed at Town Meeting, and then taken to a ballot; the policy currently in place was written nineteen years ago, without information given about its impact on tax payers, and a minimum quorum at Town Meeting.

Mr. Rauscher suggested that instead of a ballot vote, the Board consider rescinding the bond authorization and reevaluation how Open Space purchases are funded.

Mr. Whitmore stated that he is wary of non-binding votes, and would not support this request.

Mr. Craft stated that the Open Space Bond was approved by secret ballot vote and is a good representation of what Ipswich values. He stated that he understands the concern, but would not be in favor of changing the current procedure.

Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to place a non-binding question on the annual election ballot in May, and Mr. Mootafian seconded. The motion failed 2-3.

New Business: Potential Disposition of Land (Assessors Map 49 Lot 2)

Mr. Marino received a detailed memo from Ethan Parsons (Senior Planner) regarding a parcel of land on Rear Old Wright Road that was taken via tax title. The Land Disposition Committee recommends donating the land to the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Ms. Alexson asked for a list of properties that are currently being held by the Town via tax title, and Mr. Marino stated that he will put one together.

Vote: Mr. Whitmore moved to reopen the warrant, and Mr. Craft seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Vote: Mr. Craft moved to put the Disposition of Land (Assessors Map 49 Lot 2) on the Annual Town Meeting warrant, and Mr. Whitmore seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Whitmore moved to close the warrant, and Mr. Craft seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

New Business: Crane Beach Stickers

Mr. Marino presented that in 2018, sale of stickers for Crane Beach took in \$132,000 in revenue, and the Town is poised to take in slightly more in 2019. In the past, former Town Manager Robin Crosbie and George Hall (Town Counsel) had discussed raising the price of a sticker from \$20 to \$25. Mr. Hall had reviewed that agreement written in 1952 and determined that while the Trustees cannot charge Ipswich residents for parking at Crane Beach, the Town can. He recommended using funds from sticker sales to establish a revolving account to replace the boardwalk.

Mr. Whitmore requested that at a future meeting, the possibility of raising sticker prices with the goal of putting money towards climate protection be discussed.

Mr. Mootafian recalled that during his first term as Selectman, raising the sticker price was discussed and did not go over well. Mr. Craft believes the discussion was not given the proper time and attention.

New Business: Pavilion Beach Parking

Ms. Alexson inquired about summer parking at Pavilion Beach, referencing the crowds and loose parking guidelines. Mr. Marino has spoken to Chief Nikas about stationing a parking enforcement team at the beach, and potentially putting together a group to make recommendations on how to ease parking.

New Business: Town Meeting Changes

Mr. Whitmore asked if the Board had ever considered hosting a representative Town Meeting instead of a public Town Meeting in an effort to address the extremes between struggling to get a quorum and having overflow attendees.

Mr. Rauscher suggested lowering the quorum number from 200.

Ms. Alexson and Mr. Craft both expressed support for an open Town Meeting.

Old Business

None.

Miscellaneous and Correspondence

None.

Vote: Mr. Rauscher moved to adjourn, and Ms. Alexson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The Select Board adjourned at 8:45pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Eileen G. Page
03.12.19*